



# KNOWLEDGE IS THE KEY

get the facts on

# MARIJUANA

## MYTH *Marijuana is not Addictive*

Marijuana is **addictive**. According to the National Institute on Drug Abuse, 1 in 6 teens who smoke marijuana will become addicted. This rate increases to 25-50% for those who smoke on a daily or near daily basis.

Teens are more susceptible to marijuana use and addiction because their **brains are still forming**. The younger you are when you try pot, the more likely you will become addicted.

## SOLUTION *Knowledge is Key*

### SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF MARIJUANA USE

- Confusion and lack of focus
- Bloodshot eyes (use of eye drops)
- Altered mental state and abrupt mood changes
- Fatigue and general lack of motivation
- Dropping studies or usual activities
- Change in eating habits
- Paraphernalia (pipes, rolling papers, shredded leafy debris, small bottles of oil, vape pens)
- In some cases, adverse mental reactions including anxiety, fear, distrust, panic, or psychosis

**More Information:** NIDA—"Available Treatments for Marijuana Use Disorders"



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## MYTH *Marijuana is Not Harmful*

### **Marijuana harms the brain**

Marijuana use impairs attention, memory, and learning. Research has shown that heavy and persistent use of pot from adolescence into adulthood can impact and **decrease IQ by up to 8 points**.

Pot use is linked to **mental health issues**, such as anxiety, depression, amotivational syndrome, and psychosis.

### **Marijuana harms the lungs**

The American Lung Association has reported that pot smoke has many of the same **toxins, irritants, and cancer causing agents** found in tobacco smoke. It also creates more **tar deposits** than traditional cigarette smoke.

### **Marijuana harms the heart**

Research shows that pot smoke is just as damaging to our cardiovascular system as tobacco smoke. There is a link between using pot and **stroke, abnormal heart rhythms, and sudden cardiac events**.

## SOLUTION *Knowledge is Key*

- Communicate to kids that marijuana use harms their future. **More Information:** NIDA—"What are marijuana's long-term effects on the brain?"
- Set and enforce clear no marijuana use rules
- Monitor your kids: Know where they are and who they are with



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### MYTH *Marijuana is No Big Deal*

Today's marijuana is **5 times stronger** than the marijuana of the 80's and 90's. Some forms of pot have between 60-90% THC (the active chemical that causes the high).

Pot continues to affect the body long after the high is gone. Pot stays in the body for **hours to days** (**weeks** in regular users) after smoking, eating, dabbing, or vaping. For example, using pot on the weekend can negatively impact schoolwork days later. **Pot harms attention, motivation, learning, and school success.**

### SOLUTION *Knowledge is Key*

- Stay up-to-date with current marijuana trends. Visit the National Institute on Drug Abuse
- Talk to your kids about the risks
- Communicate clear no marijuana use rules
- Monitor your kids: Know where they are and who they are with



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## MYTH *Stoned Driving is Safe*

Stoned driving **IS** drugged driving. It is **illegal** and **unsafe**.

**Marijuana is the #1 illicit drug** found in the blood stream of impaired drivers, fatally injured drivers, and drivers involved in motor vehicle crashes.

Marijuana impairs motor coordination, time & distance perception, lane tracking, attention, and reaction time.

**Marijuana and alcohol are a deadly combination.** Using both drugs at the same time increases your chance of a crash.

## SOLUTION *Knowledge is Key*

- Educate that stoned driving is drugged driving and is dangerous to driver, rider, and others on road
- Communicate clear no marijuana use rules
- Monitor your kids: Know where they are and who they are with

**Resource:** Parent-Teen Driving Contract by Dale Wisely, Ph.D.